

IRANIAN SHAM TRIAL

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to alert my colleagues to the ongoing sham trial of 13 Jews in Iran. Iran's judiciary said on Monday that suspect Hamid "Danny" Tefileen had confessed to passing classified information to Israel's Mossad, and Iranian state television broadcast an interview with Mr. Tefileen in which he stated he had been trained in Israel. It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that his confession was coerced since the defendant's court-appointed attorney noted there was no information to back up that confession.

Israel has repeatedly denied this man was a spy. And since I understand that it is not illegal for any Iranian citizen to visit Israel, the charges against Mr. Tefileen should be promptly dismissed.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Iranian government to free these men at once. They are not guilty of anything more than being Jewish. Moreover, I request my colleagues to cosponsor H. Con. Res. 307, a measure I introduced, along with the Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), opposing this ongoing prosecution of 13 members of the Jewish community.

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OPPOSITION TO WTO FOR COMMUNIST CHINA

(Mr. ROHRBACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRBACHER. First and foremost, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) on the statement that he just made. All of us should be very united in this effort to draw a spotlight on what is going on in Iran. If the Iranian people, who I am convinced want to have better relations with the United States, then Iran must know that they cannot conduct this sham trial and brutally terrorize their Jewish population or any other part of their population. We need to pay attention to this and send a message to the Iranians that we want to have good relations with them.

But what I wanted to mention today, and with my last 30 seconds, is that we have heard a lot about trade with China this morning and we will hear more about it. The trade that we have had with Communist China these last 10 years have not made this world a safer world. In fact, it has done nothing but build up the powerful forces in Communist China that now threaten the peace of the world.

Furthermore, it has not worked to the benefit of the people of the United States. What we have in China is the building up of their infrastructure. Our trade with them is building up their technological capabilities; building

them factories so that they can then export to the United States and get enough money to buy weapons in order to put us under a threat. I would oppose any of this WTO for China.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Such record votes on postponed questions may be taken in two groups: The first occurring before the debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, and the second after debate has concluded on the remaining motions.

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RELATING TO CONTINUING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND POLITICAL OPPRESSION IN SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 295) relating to continuing human rights violations and political oppression in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 25 years after the fall of South Vietnam to Communist forces, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 295

Whereas April 30, 2000, marks the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon to Communist forces of North Vietnam;

Whereas 25 years after the Vietnam War ended, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a one-party state ruled and controlled by the Vietnamese Communist Party;

Whereas the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam continues to violate the liberties and civil rights of its own citizens through arbitrary arrests, detentions without trial, and the censorship of peaceful expressions of political and religious beliefs;

Whereas the Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999 notes that the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam "continued to repress basic political and some religious freedoms and to commit numerous abuses";

Whereas the Socialist Republic of Vietnam still retains Article 4 in its Constitution that ensures the supremacy of the Vietnamese Communist Party as the only political party in the country while continuing to enforce an extra-legal administrative decree to detain or place under house arrest any dissidents or civilians for up to two years, without trial, under the pretext of "endangering national security";

Whereas the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is one of the most politically repressive and poorest countries in the world, with an average annual per capita income of \$330;

Whereas, according to the Department of State and international human rights organizations, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam continues to restrict unregistered religious activities and persecutes citizens on the basis of their religious affiliation through arbitrary arrests and detention, harassment, physical abuse,

censorship, and the denial of the rights of free association and religious worship;

Whereas the Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 1999 on Vietnam estimates that "there are from 30 to 50 religious prisoners" but "the number is difficult to verify with any precision because of the secrecy surrounding the arrest, detention, and release process";

Whereas the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam continues to prevent human rights organizations from unfettered and open investigations of allegations of state-sponsored oppression of the right to worship by its citizens, and has prevented the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, Abdelfattah Amor, from meeting with various religious leaders during his visit to Vietnam in October 1998;

Whereas the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam systematically violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in contravention of its status as a member of the United Nations;

Whereas the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam systematically violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in contravention of its status as a signatory to that agreement; and

Whereas it is in the interest of the United States to promote political, religious, and economic freedom throughout the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) requests the President to restate and make clear to the leadership of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam that—

(A) the American people are firmly committed to political, religious, and economic freedom for the citizens of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; and

(B) the United States fully expects equal protection under law with all Vietnamese citizens, regardless of religious belief, political philosophy, or socio-political association;

(2) urges the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam—

(A) to cease violations of religious freedom as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998;

(B) to release all religious prisoners, political prisoners, and prisoners of conscience, and immediately cease the harassment, detention, physical abuse, and imprisonment of Vietnamese citizens who have exercised their legitimate rights to freedom of belief, expression, and association;

(C) to allow all Vietnamese citizens the right to free expression, freedom of association, freedom of the press, and religious worship; and

(D) to formally commit to a framework and a set timetable for open and fair elections that will facilitate the ability of Vietnamese citizens to peacefully choose their own local and national leaders, free from fear and intimidation; and

(3) commends the Vietnamese-American community for initiating a memorial to American and South Vietnamese soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom during the Vietnam War, which is under development and will be located in Westminster, California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 295, the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 295, which was introduced by my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER). And I would also like to thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), for his work in crafting the current language in this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly unfortunate that 25 years after the end of the Vietnam War the Socialist Republic Vietnam is still a one-party state ruled and controlled by the Vietnamese Communist party. Regrettably, the government in Hanoi continues to repress basic political and some religious freedoms, and to commit numerous human rights abuses.

This resolution rightfully requests the President to make clear to the government of Vietnam the firm commitment of the American people to fundamental human rights and equal treatment for all people of Vietnam still persist.

It further urges Vietnam to cease its violations of human rights and to undertake the long overdue liberalization of its antiquated political system.

And, finally, it appropriately commends the Vietnamese American community for a memorial to fallen American and South Vietnamese soldiers being developed in Westminster, California. In that regard, I call upon the Vietnamese government to do all it can to assist in bringing our POWs and MIAs home to American soil.

Mr. Speaker, democracy and human rights are not eastern or western values, as some might contend. They are universal values and the right of people everywhere, including the 77 million people of Vietnam. I want to praise this resolution for pointing out the injustice that tragically exists in Vietnam today. Communism is a dead ideology. Somehow, and surprisingly, the government in Hanoi still has not received that news.

I sincerely hope that the bureaucrats in Hanoi are listening today and, as a result, will undertake the necessary reforms to release minds and spirits of the Vietnamese people. The people of Vietnam clearly deserve much better.

Once again I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for introducing this resolution and his continuing commitment to human rights and democracy, and I also want

to commend the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), for bringing it to the floor at this time. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to strongly support this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of this resolution.

At the outset, I would like to commend my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), for crafting this resolution, which is so necessary to focus attention on the continuing violations of human rights in all forms in Vietnam.

I also want to commend the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, my good friend, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for their work on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Vietnam continues to be—25 years after the conclusion of that tragic war—one of the most repressive societies on the face of this planet. Similarly to China, Vietnam has opened up its economy to some extent, but its political system is as rigid, unbending, and repressive as it has ever been.

I call, therefore, on the government of Vietnam to release all religious and political prisoners, all prisoners of conscience; and to immediately cease the harassment, detention, physical abuse and imprisonment of Vietnamese citizens who are exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of belief, expression, and association.

I call on the government of Vietnam, Mr. Speaker, to abolish article four of the Vietnamese constitution and repeal all regulations and codes and decrees prohibiting citizens the rights to free expression, freedom of association, freedom of the press and religious worship.

I also think it is critical that we as a body call on the government of Vietnam to set an early timetable for open and fair elections that at long last will facilitate the inclusion of Vietnam in the community of civilized nations and allow its citizens to peacefully choose their own local and national leaders, free from fear and intimidation.

I think it is particularly significant, Mr. Speaker, that the government of Vietnam has prevented the United Nations special rapporteur on religious intolerance from meeting with the various religious leaders during his visit to Vietnam. Vietnam has an obligation, as a signatory of the appropriate treaties, to allow access by United Nations' officials to all religious practitioners.

We are indeed pleased that a quarter century has gone by since the conclusion of that tragic war, but we are appalled at the continued suppression of

the Vietnamese people. I earnestly hope and trust that this move by the Congress of the United States, which I trust will be approved unanimously, will begin the process of opening up the political situation in that country. And I once again commend my friend from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), the sponsor of the measure.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), and the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), as well as the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for being very cooperative on this measure.

This is one of those measures, Mr. Speaker, that goes through Congress that has bipartisan support because it reflects fundamental values which I believe that this body is supposed to be all about. This is a body that represents the greatest democracy in the world, and all of us who meet here share these values of democracy and freedom. And when we are talking about issues that go to the heart of our country, we stand united.

This resolution commemorates the 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and expresses a tribute to the Americans and South Vietnamese who gave their lives in the cause of freedom in that conflict. The international press reports from Vietnam this past weekend unanimously emphasized the ongoing repression that the people of Vietnam have had to suffer under the Communist regime in Hanoi.

The violation of human rights and the denial of democracy for the people of Vietnam has been just a horrific experience over these last 25 years and has caused a firsthand observer, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, to state that regardless of America's shortcomings in conducting that war, that the wrong side won.

Singapore's senior statesman and ASEAN founding member, Lee Kuan Yew, commented recently that the sacrifices by the Americans in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s gave the rest of the region, which also faced Communist-backed guerilla movements, time to stabilize and even prosper. So, yes, there were some good things that came out of Vietnam, yet the people of Vietnam still suffer.

And there was great sacrifice during that war: 58,000 Americans perished and more than 300,000 were wounded. In addition, 270,000 South Vietnamese military personnel perished, and over 570,000 were wounded. And that was before, of course, the final offensive by the Communist forces 25 years ago today.

This resolution honors their sacrifice and calls attention to the cause of freedom in Vietnam. This resolution is entirely in support of the people of Vietnam who deserve the right and the opportunity to participate in the democratic process of a free and Democratic society.

The greatest example of the potential of Vietnam is perhaps the tremendous educational and economic success of the Vietnamese American community, such as that in Little Saigon, which is in my district. And I am very proud to represent these freedom loving people who came here in such turmoil and have made a success of their lives despite great hardship.

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In fact, the fact that they came here with little more than the shirts on their back and now live in relative prosperity and have made wonderful citizens for our country indicates just how important freedom and democracy is considering that the people that they left behind still languish in poverty and still are repressed and suffer great tyranny there in Vietnam.

This resolution expresses the hope that some day the people of South Vietnam will enjoy the same kind of freedom that the people who came here after the war enjoy. The resolution urges the Vietnamese regime to commit to a framework, a set timetable for open and free elections.

Twenty-five years after the end of the war, it is time for Vietnamese leaders to make peace with their own people and to permit their citizens to peacefully choose their own local and national leaders without fear of intimidation.

This resolution also, as the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN) stated, congratulates the Vietnamese-American community in Southern California and throughout the United States for initiating and funding through private donations the first memorial to honor both American and South Vietnamese military personnel who sacrificed their lives during the Vietnam War, which is now being developed in Orange County, California.

Finally, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bipartisan resolution which honors the sacrifice of American citizen soldiers who perished for the cause of freedom during the Indochina conflict by supporting the struggle for democracy in Vietnam.

And finally, I would like to salute a member of my staff, Mr. Al Santoli, who is standing behind me at this moment, who helped me put this resolution together. Al Santoli, a triple Purple Heart winner from the Vietnam War, has dedicated his life to the cause of freedom and justice not only in Southeast Asia but throughout the world; and we appreciate the effort that he put into this resolution, as well.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in the relatively short time that she has been with us, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) has demonstrated extraordinary qualities of leadership in many fields but particularly in the field of defending human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from California for yielding me the time for this gracious ability to give me some time to speak a little about April 30, 1975, marking the beginning of a treacherous boat journey for many Vietnamese who sought refuge in an unknown land to them and an uncertain future. These individuals risked everything for a chance to live freely and to provide better opportunities for their children and their families.

I rise today as a proud cosponsor of the H. Con. Res. 295, legislation relating to continuing human rights violations and political oppression in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam still 25 years later since the fall of Saigon.

I also rise to pay special tribute and to recognize the efforts of those servicemen and women who served as Vietnam War veterans and also to the Vietnamese who fought for freedom and democracy in Vietnam.

As my colleagues know, I represent the largest Vietnamese-American community in the Nation in Orange County, California. As a proud member of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, it was my distinct honor just last month to hold a second hearing on the human rights conditions in Vietnam. We held one a couple years ago.

We received testimony from expert witnesses who tell us still freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of collective bargaining are still sorely missed in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese Government continues to grossly violate human rights by incarcerating prisoners of conscience and placing dissidents under strict surveillance.

So as we continue to move forward with furthering relations between our two countries, it is my hope that we will address the current human rights issues in Vietnam: the violations, the religious persecution, the social injustice that many individuals still face in Vietnam.

Mr. Speaker, as we reflect on this tragic day, it is our duty as Members of Congress to honor the memories of the individuals that have fought for liberty and democracy in Vietnam.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 295.

This Member congratulates and thanks the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for bringing this matter to the body's attention and for recognizing that the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon was an important time to focus the American attention on what we were fighting for and to also recognize the contributions of so many men and women among our countrymen who made tremendous sacrifices in that war and I imagine with the hope that some impact might prevail in Vietnam, as well.

I also, once again, want to thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking minority member of the subcommittee, for his cooperation and his assistance in bringing this legislation to the floor.

We were happy to work with the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) on any kind of perfecting amendments, but his legislation is very timely and was very well crafted to begin with.

Certainly it is appropriate to express concerns about the continuing human rights violations and the political repression in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Even as the United States moves forward in establishing relations with Vietnam, which this Member supports, we should be mindful that serious human rights concerns do remain.

Indeed, in the 25 years since the end of the war, regretfully this Member must say flatly that there has been no discernible progress, no discernible progress, towards representative government or basic democratic freedom in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese Constitution enshrines the principle of one-party communist rule. Political dissidents are routinely harassed or arrested for attempting to exercise their fundamental human rights, such as freedom of speech and association.

The Vietnamese Government also continues to restrict unregistered religious activities and to persecute citizens on the basis of their religious affiliations. Vietnam can be said to be an equal opportunity oppressor of religious freedoms as Buddhists, Christians, and over groups also suffer to some extent from Government harassment and repression.

The Government has also refused to allow human rights groups and the U.N. special rapporteur on religious intolerance unfettered access to investigate allegations of religious oppression.

This resolution urges the Government of Vietnam to release religious and political prisoners and cease harassment of those exercising their legitimate rights to allow basic freedoms, such as freedom of speech and

association, and to commit to a framework and a timetable for open and fair elections.

It is time that the Vietnamese Government realizes that one-party communist regimes have no place in the modern world. It is time that the talented, hard-working, and energetic people of Vietnam enjoy their rights to fundamental religious, economic, and political freedom.

Mr. Speaker, a few minutes ago the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) referred to comments recently made by the senior senator from Arizona, Senator MCCAIN, who said the wrong side won.

Well, I would also like to reference the senior senator from my home State of Nebraska, a member of the opposite party, Senator ROBERT KERREY, who is a courageous, distinguished American who won the Congressional Medal of Honor in Vietnam and who lost part of his leg in the process. He came home and protested the way the war was being conducted.

But this past weekend, in the major papers of our State, he had an opinion piece; and he said, I was fighting and we were fighting on the right side. Upon reflection, upon visitation to Vietnam and to Southeast Asia, I understand what we were doing there was appropriate.

I want and will include that as a matter of the RECORD. It is an outstanding reflection upon his service in Vietnam and also his reflection upon service in the Congress of the United States as he prepares to retire from the other body.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution attempts to send a clear message to the Vietnam regime about the need for fundamental reforms. This Member urges his colleagues to support strongly H. Con. Res. 295.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following article authored by Senator KERREY for the RECORD:

VIETNAM: 25 YEARS LATER; IN HINDSIGHT, A
JUST CAUSE
(By Bob Kerrey)

Today we mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, the day Americans witnessed the end of a war in which our enemy emerged victorious and our ally defeated. For many years afterward, Americans buried this experience and turned their backs on the problems of Southeast Asia. Anger and self-absorption dominated the debates that occasionally occurred about what went wrong.

In the past 10 years, anger and self-absorption have been replaced with active, optimistic policies. In Southeast Asia, we have seen impressive successes. Beginning with President Bush's initiatives to bring peace to Cambodia and continuing with President Clinton's initiatives to normalize relations with Vietnam, we have started to return with an American spirit that advances the cause of freedom.

No doubt the war affected America, but it wasn't our worst war-connected failure. The most difficult war of the last century was not Vietnam; it was World War I. In 1943, the year I was born, veterans of the Great War were remembering the 25th anniversary of their armistice while their sons were fighting in Italy and the Pacific against enemies

whose military strength was ignored on account of the bitter memories of the failures of the first World War. So, as I remember April 30, 1975, I will also remember Nov. 11, 1918, and what happened when America isolated itself from the world. But I will also remember the pride I felt when I sat in joint sessions of Congress listening to Vaclav Havel, Kim Dae Jung, Lech Walesa and Nelson Mandela thank Americans for the sacrifices they made on behalf of their freedom.

The famous photo of South Vietnamese ascending a stairway to a helicopter on the roof of our Saigon embassy represents both our shame and our honor. The shame is that we, in the end, turned our back on Vietnam and on the sacrifice of more than 55,000 Americans. We succumbed to fatigue and self-doubt, we reneged on the promise we had made to support the South Vietnamese, and the communists were able to defeat our allies. The honor is that during the fall of Saigon we rescued tens of thousands of our South Vietnamese friends, and in the years following we welcomed over a million more Vietnamese to our shores.

For a young, college-educated son of the clean, optimistic American heartland, the war taught some valuable lessons. My trip to Vietnam gave me a sense of the immense size and variety of our world. I was also awed by something that still moves me: That Americans would risk their lives for the freedom of another people. At the Philadelphia Naval Hospital, I learned that everyone needs America's generosity—even me.

During the war, I knew the fight for freedom was the core reason for our being in Vietnam. But after the war, as I learned more about our government's decision-making in the war years, I became angry. I was angry at the failure of our leaders to tell the truth about what was happening in Vietnam. I was angry at their ignorance about the motives of our North Vietnamese adversaries and the history of Vietnam. Our leaders didn't seem to understand the depth of commitment of our adversaries to creating their version of an independent Vietnam. I particularly detested President Nixon for his duplicity in campaigning on a promise to end the war, and then, once in office, broadening the war to Cambodia. But time has taught me the sterility of anger. So, as I recently told former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, I forgive our leaders of the Vietnam period.

I am able to forgive, not out of any great generosity of mine, but because the passage of time and the actions of the communist government of Vietnam have proven to me we were fighting on the right side. In their harsh treatment of the Vietnamese people, in denying them medicine and essential consumer goods, and in persecuting religious practice, the Vietnamese communists in the post-war years proved themselves to be communists. The most eloquent comment on life under Ho Chi Minh's heirs was the flight of millions of Vietnamese who risked death on the high seas rather than live under that regime. If there was to be a trial to determine if the Vietnam War was worth fighting, I would call the Boat People as my only witnesses.

Was the war a mistake, or was it worth the effort and sacrifice? Everyone touched by it must answer that question for themselves. When I came home in 1969 and for many years afterward, I did not believe it was. Today, with the passage of time and the experience of seeing both the benefits of freedom won by our sacrifice and the human destruction done by dictatorships, I believe the cause was just and the sacrifice not in vain.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) who is the chairman of our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, let me just begin by thanking the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) for his excellent piece of legislation, which tells the truth about the ongoing repression in Vietnam.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to share some observations from a human rights fact-finding mission I made in December to Saigon. The principal purpose of the trip was to inspect the new refugee processing program, which, as most of my colleagues know, has recently moved from Bangkok to our new U.S. Consulate in Saigon.

As I think many of my colleagues know as well, I am very pleased to have been the sponsor, the prime author, of comprehensive foreign policy legislation, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 and 2001, which became law last November.

That bill provided for an extension of the McCain amendment on Vietnamese refugee children through fiscal year 2001, along with an expansion of the amendment to cover the so-called co-residency cases.

The new law also included very important language making clear that our refugee programs in Vietnam should be far more than a token effort. We made that clear in all kinds of cases. For example, with the Montagnards who were turned down because they kept fighting the Communists after 1975, with reeducation camp survivors whose refugee applications were denied because they were afraid to talk in front of government-hired interpreters, with former U.S. Government employees who were turned down for no good reason at all, and with people who have suffered recent persecution for their political or religious beliefs, we need to be far more generous than we have been in the past.

It is too early, Mr. Speaker, to know whether or not our Saigon refugee program will live up to those expectations, which is the clear meaning and intent of the law. But I promise, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, to keep my eye on the ball and to keep pushing hard for it.

In addition to focusing on the refugee programs, Mr. Speaker, we also focused heavily on the human rights issues, democracy, and transparency in Vietnam, which we have also done in our subcommittee over the last several years.

I met with Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, who—like the great Professor Hoat, who is now in this country—is a courageous and brilliant former prisoner of conscience. He is now under virtual house arrest, however, in Saigon. His

phone is tapped. His Internet connections have been cut off. He and members of his family are followed wherever they go.

Notwithstanding the fact that I had a Government thug following me wherever I went, Dr. Que invited us into his home and gave us a fascinating lecture on the future prospects for reform and democracy in Vietnam.

He explained, for example, that the principal contradiction in Vietnamese society is not between North and South, not between traditionalism and modernity, but between the Politburo and everybody else in the country.

We also met with religious leaders, including Archbishop Man, Father Chan Tin, and members of the Hoa Hao Buddhist Church. And we met with Montagnard students, some of whom are Protestants who have been forbidden to have prayer meetings in their country.

Unfortunately, on the advice of Ambassador Peterson, we were unable to meet with the leaders of the Unified Buddhist Church, who have come in for some of the most brutal treatment of all. The ambassador felt the time was not right. The next trip, I can assure my colleagues, we will meet with them. But we have continued to raise their issues, as well.

One thing that was very clear from all of our conversations with human rights advocates, religious figures, and ordinary Vietnamese was that international pressure does indeed work.

For example, Dr. Que pointed out that while trade may bring some reforms to Vietnam, these reforms will come quicker if the United States strongly uses each economic concession, especially the prospect of a bilateral trade agreement, as leverage to require immediate progress on human rights.

If anyone doubts that economic leverage works to change the behavior of the Vietnamese Government, these doubts should be resolved by the experience of the ROVR program.

In mid-1996, the Vietnamese Government promised that if the 20,000 or so people who were eligible for ROVR would return to Vietnam, the U.S. would be able to interview them for refugee resettlement in the U.S.

Eighteen months after making this promise, the Vietnamese Government had let us interview only a few hundred of the 20,000 people. But when it was made clear to them that they would not get a waiver of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which would be necessary to allow subsidized loans under the U.S. Export-Import and OPIC programs, they allowed us to start interviewing people almost immediately.

We eventually got 18,000 people to freedom under the ROVR program. So linkage to economic issues does work.

Let me also focus on a couple of human rights issues. As the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) said so eloquently, the Vietnamese Government must stop imprisoning people for

their political or religious beliefs. They must release all prisoners of conscience that they currently hold.

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Hanoi insists that it has no political or religious prisoners, only ordinary law breakers. When visiting, American delegations like my own point out that these law breakers include Catholic priests and Buddhist monks. When we raise these issues, they say that these people have been imprisoned for such crimes as activities to overthrow the government, which is utter nonsense, or using freedom and democracy to injure the national unity, whatever that means.

Vietnamese officials cheerfully remind visitors that they have a "different system." They need to be persuaded that if they are going to do business with us they have to abide by internationally recognized norms regarding human rights.

The Vietnamese government must eliminate other gross human rights violations such as its two-child-per-couple policy, which deprives the parents of unauthorized children of employment and other government benefits.

It must grant workers the right to organize independent trade unions and stop the practice of forced labor. It has to stop jamming Radio Free Asia, which tries to bring the Vietnamese people the kind of broadcasting they would provide for themselves if their government would allow freedom of expression.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit for the RECORD an excellent article written by Le Van Tien on "Vietnam's Failed Revolution." It was in the Asian Wall Street Journal on April 28, 2000.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Fri., Apr. 28, 2000]

Vietnam's Failed Revolution . . .

(By Le Van Tien)

We are marching to Saigon.
We are entering the city.
We are liberating the South.

This was the song I heard the National Liberation Front soldiers singing as they marched behind the North Vietnamese tanks that rolled into Saigon on April 30, 1975. Later the lyrics were taught to children, who sang them enthusiastically enough. Say what you will about the Communists, they have always understood that children love parades.

In the years just after the unification of Vietnam, even as many South Vietnamese were either fleeing in boats or being sent to prison or "re-education," others—particularly young people—were willing to join the Communists in efforts to rebuild the country. Many were even willing to fight and die in the wars against Cambodia and China.

Yet 25 years later most of the survivors can barely remember the songs they used to sing about the revolution. For those of us who were imprisoned or forced into exile, it is tempting to judge the revolution by our own standards. It is more instructive, however, to judge a movement by the extent to which it has met its own goals. Life in Vietnam has indeed changed in many ways since 1975, but not in any of the ways promised by the revolution.

Vietnam was never a rich country, but now it is one of the poorest in the world, with a per capita GDP of about \$300. Teachers make \$20 per month, construction workers about \$30, medical doctors \$35. Of the 37 million working-age Vietnamese, only 7 million have stable jobs, almost all in government or in state-owned enterprises. The remaining 30 million are seasonal workers employed for 200 days or less per year.

Almost everyone in Vietnam is struggling for survival day by day, and almost everyone blames the government—especially corruption in government. It is no accident that people in rural areas are the poorest of all (according to the World Bank, about 45% of Vietnamese farmers live below the poverty line) because these are the areas where government is most corrupt and has the greatest power over people's lives.

Despite the harsh measures taken by the Vietnamese government against those who openly express their displeasure with government policies, there have been periodic demonstrations and even uprisings among rural people protesting corruption and oppression.

In 1989, several hundred people from villages in the Mekong Delta traveled to Saigon, now called Ho Chi Minh City, to demand improved conditions in the countryside. These demonstrations were partly motivated by resentment at continued North Vietnamese domination of the South, but in the early 1990s there were riots in three provinces in Central Vietnam, in an area known as the "cradle of the revolution."

These events culminated in 1997 in Thai Binh, a northern province noted for the unusually high percentage of enthusiastic Communists among its people, in which thousands of peasants and farmers detained armed public security officers and demanded an end to confiscatory taxes, corruption, and other official abuses. Even a group of high-ranking Army officers from Thai Binh openly announced that "the Communist party has succeeded in abolishing the old regime in which man exploited man, only to replace it with a regime in which the Party itself exploits the people." Many of the Thai Binh demonstrators were sent to prison or re-education, but the government also dismissed about 50 officials including the head of the provincial People's Committee.

The poor living conditions of the farmers and the working class contrast sharply with the lifestyle of many Communist cadres, government officials, and executives in state-owned enterprises. They can afford conspicuous consumption not because of their salaries, but because of their far larger income from official corruption. In recent years, the government itself has recognized that corruption is at the heart of its problems, strangling the economy and scaring away foreign investors.

In mid-1999 General Secretary Le Kha Phieu announced a two-year campaign of "self-criticism." The campaign is intended to end bribery, extortion, smuggling, and other corrupt practices, in order to win the confidence of the people and also of foreign investors. These investors were initially attracted by the official policies of economic "renovation" and "openness" announced in the early 1990s, but they have been discouraged not only by the burdens of corruption and hyperregulation, but also by the consequent decline in economic growth rates from about 8% annually to just over 4%. Most ominously, many are frightened by the prospect of political instability as a consequence of the steady erosion of the government's legitimacy.

The Vietnamese government seems to understand that it is in danger of losing its grip on power. It has been quietly advised by scholars, international financial institutions

and representatives of other governments that it must act to regain the trust of the Vietnamese people. The most obvious way to do this would be through a campaign of renovation and openness extending beyond the economic sphere to include freedom of expression, religion, and the press as well as steps toward more representative government.

Party leaders, however, regard these freedoms as an even greater threat to their power than the current popular dissatisfaction with government. In August 1999, at the closing session of the Seventh Communist Party Plenum, General Secretary Le Kha Phieu stated that "there will be no sharing of power. The Communists will hold firmly to leadership. Any request for democracy, freedom, human rights, or 'peaceful evolution,' is a conspiracy by the enemy forces to erase the socialist regime in Vietnam."

This injunction has manifested itself in strong measures by local authorities throughout the country against actions suspected to be harmful to internal stability and order. Most recently, a number of Hoa Hao Buddhists were imprisoned for participating in a ceremony to commemorate the 53rd anniversary of the disappearance of their founder.

Father Chan Tin, an outspoken Roman Catholic priest and human rights advocate, was recently "tried" in absentia at public meeting organized by the People's Committee in the district where his church is located. Father Tin was charged with such crimes as "seeking to abolish the leadership of the Communist Party" and "destroying the solidarity between religions and the state." And the principal leaders of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, the country's largest religious denomination, remain under virtual house arrest.

The government also recently arrested, searched, and deported French reporter Sylvaine Pasquier, who was apprehended outside the house of former political prisoner Nguyen Dan Que, whom she was attempting to interview. Ms. Pasquier reports that at one point her interrogator made a gesture to simulate a gun at her head and said she could put heroin in her purse and condemn her as a drug smuggler.

Next month Mr. Phieu will make an official visit to France at the invitation of President Chirac—the first visit to a democratic country by a General Secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party since Ho Chi Minh visited France in 1946. The Phieu visit was arranged with the help of the French Communist Party, which recently announced its determination to "rejuvenate the spirit of communism" as a movement committed to "return political power to the individual citizen."

Perhaps Mr. Phieu and his colleagues in the Vietnamese Communist Party will come to share the insight of their French comrades that Communism can only survive by finding a way to coexist with democracy and individual freedom. If not—if they keep trying to cure the consequences of Stalinism with more Stalinism—it is hard to imagine that anyone will be singing songs about the revolution in another 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, I want to salute the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for this excellent resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his supportive comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of the time to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from

New York (Mr. GILMAN), for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H. Con. Res. 295 relating to continuing human rights violations and political oppression in the socialist Republic of Vietnam, 25 years after the fall of South Vietnam to Communist forces.

This past weekend, April 30, marked the fall of Saigon, which ended the Vietnam war 25 years ago. There were a series of events held across America, including in my district in Northern Virginia, to commemorate this tragic event in history.

Vietnamese Americans from the Washington, DC, metropolitan area gathered this past weekend to honor the fallen heroes who sacrificed their lives in the name of freedom. In addition, they staged an all-night candlelight vigil, a flag ceremony, and a peaceful demonstration to keep the hope and flame of democracy alive for those still living in the socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The Vietnam war took its toll on American families sending fathers, brothers, husbands, and uncles thousands of miles away to the jungles of Vietnam to fight the enemy they could never face. We must never forget that over 58,000 Americans and over 300,000 South Vietnamese soldiers lost their lives defending and protecting fundamental ideals, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and free and open elections.

Their noble sacrifices should serve as a reminder that the Vietnam war was fought on the principles and values of democracy.

H. Con. Res. 295 is a timely resolution which reiterates America's commitment to political, religious, and economic freedom for the citizens of the socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Furthermore, this resolution urges the government to release all political and religious prisoners and prisoners of conscience, to allow their citizens the right to freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of the press and freedom of religious worship, and more importantly to formally commit to a framework and timetable for open and fair elections.

Finally, H. Con. Res. 295 recognizes and commends the Vietnamese American community for initiating an international memorial to American and South Vietnamese soldiers who gave their lives for the cause of freedom during the Vietnam war, which will be located in Westminster, California.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 295 to honor all those who valiantly fought during the Vietnam war and to commemorate the fall of Saigon.

I commend the gentleman from California and his staff for their hard work to bring to our attention this important issue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House

suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 295, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

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EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S MAGEN DAVID ADOM SOCIETY AND ITS SYMBOL THE RED SHIELD OF DAVID

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 464) expressing the sense of Congress on international recognition of Israel's Magen David Adom Society and its symbol the Red Shield of David.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 464

Whereas Israel's Magen David Adom Society has provided emergency relief to people in many countries in times of need, pain, and suffering since 1930, regardless of nationality or religious affiliation;

Whereas in the past year alone, the Magen David Adom Society has provided invaluable services in Kosovo, Indonesia, and Kenya following the bombing of the United States Embassy in Kenya, and in the wake of the earthquakes that devastated Greece and Turkey;

Whereas the American Red Cross has recognized the superb and invaluable work done by the Magen David Adom Society and considers the exclusion of the Magen David Adom Society from the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement "an injustice of the highest order";

Whereas the American Red Cross has repeatedly urged that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement recognize the Magen David Adom Society as a full member;

Whereas the Magen David Adom Society utilizes the Red Shield of David as its emblem, in similar fashion to the utilization of the Red Cross and Red Crescent by other national societies;

Whereas the Red Cross and the Red Crescent have been recognized as protected symbols under the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;

Whereas the International Committee of the Red Cross has ignored previous requests from the United States Congress to recognize the Magen David Adom Society;

Whereas the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement state that it "makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions" and it "may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature";

Whereas although similar national organizations of Iraq, North Korea, and Afghanistan are recognized as full members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Magen David Adom Society has been denied membership since 1949; and

Whereas in fiscal year 1999 the United States Government provided \$119,400,000 to the International Committee of the Red Cross and \$7,300,000 to the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Now, therefore, be it